



## Testimony in Support of S.B. 1214

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Good morning Madam. Chair and members, my name is Margaret McGettrick and I am the Director of Education at the Texas Catholic Conference. The TCC is the statewide association of the 15 Roman Catholic dioceses in our state and it is our responsibility to advocate for the public policy positions of the active Bishops of Texas. Thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony today.

We ask that the Committee support passage of S.B 1214 as a matter of justice as well as public safety. Regardless of whether our students are in public, private or parochial schools we need to recognize that they are all Texas children who would like to compete in a fair and equitable manner regarding academics, athletics and music.

As a former principal and superintendent of Catholic schools I have had firsthand experience of students leaving Corpus Christi at 2:30-3:00 in the afternoon to play a basketball game in Austin and then return home in the wee hours of the morning. Depending on their route they are passing schools in their same neighborhood as well those in Robstown, Mathis, Skidmore, Odem and Gregory Portland. Some of these students have told me that they have more in common with their buddies in their community than they do with students in a private high school in Austin.

Recently I spoke to several coaches, including the former Athletic Director of Incarnate Word Kasper Wenzel, who have coached in both public and private schools and, without exception, they have commented on how many times they do play the public schools in friendly games on a regular basis. Incarnate Word High School, with an enrollment of 400-500 students regularly play "friendly" basketball games with all the 5A schools in the city and surrounding Corpus Christi areas. It gives all the schools an opportunity to play their community partners.

To ensure compliance to the rules and regulations of the UIL all accrediting agencies which are part of the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission have oversight by a TEA liaison granted by the Commissioner of Education.

For questions regarding this testimony or any of the issues on the Bishops' Legislative Agenda, please contact the Texas Catholic Conference at 512-339-9882 or you can email Margaret McGettrick at [margaret@txcatholic.org](mailto:margaret@txcatholic.org)